

As more and more evidence is compiled, the truth about climate change becomes more and more clear. We are seeing storms and superstorms, droughts and glacial melting, heat waves and sea level rises, barges running aground on the Mississippi and wildfires raging — hundreds and hundreds of phenomena totally consistent with the models and predictions of what results from humans throwing billions of tons of carbon into the air, as well as totally inconsistent with other explanations, like naturally occurring cycles or solar variations or volcanic eruptions or some such thing.

Almost a decade ago, two scientists from New Jersey, Rob Socolow and Steve Pacala, presented a way of thinking about the problem intended to help deal with it. Let's look at specific steps, using current knowledge and technology, that humans (and policymakers) could take, each step saving 25 billion tons in emissions from being released over the next 50 years compared to a "business as usual" scenario. They suggested calling these bunches of carbon "wedges" because each step could be visualized as a wedge cut out of a graph of growing carbon in the air. Each of these steps would be challenging but achievable without technological breakthroughs. With maybe 10 such wedges, the climate could be stabilized and climate runaway could be avoided.

Wedges consist of such things as doubling vehicle fuel efficiency, stopping large deforestation, improving the efficiency of heating and cooling buildings by 25 percent, replacing or retrofitting coal-fired power plants so they double efficiency, and increasing electricity generation with wind by a factor of 25 or so from the level of a decade ago. A menu of wedges, picked and chosen depending on what various countries could do and what the projected cost would be, made the problem seem tractable.

Some of us thought then that we could get to work: that the wedge visualization made the problem less daunting, and that lawmakers would all see not just the costs of implementing the wedges but also the economic, societal, and technological benefits.

Alas, years have passed, and denial and inaction have prevailed. Some benefit has been gained from the surge in production of natural gas that has displaced some coal in generation of electricity. Although that benefit is incidental — and accidental, from a policy point of view — climate scientists nevertheless welcome it. However, the world finds itself now in need, not of 10 or 12 remedial wedges, as scientists thought a decade ago, but probably 20 or more.

It is time to stop making excuses for our reluctance to commit.

Announcing Community Office Hours

In the months ahead, I am holding a series of community office hours in towns throughout Central New Jersey. A full list of upcoming events is [available on my website](#).

At each event, I or a member of my staff will be available to help you deal with any problems you may be having with Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the VA, U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services, or any other federal agency. Staff also will be available to provide information on federal grants and contracts, acquiring flags flown over the U.S. Capitol, and more.

The office hours are intended to provide an easy, accessible way for you to seek help, and I hope you'll stop by. If you are unable to attend, though, please know that you can seek assistance at any time by calling 1-87-RUSH-HOLT (1-877-874-4658).

The History of the House

Since 1789, the U.S. House of Representatives has been at work creating the laws of the land and shaping the American experience. [History.House.Gov](#) is an effort to preserve, collect, and interpret the heritage of the House, serving as the institution's memory.

This new comprehensive website integrates the history of the House, the art and artifacts in the House Collection, and records and research materials that date back to the beginnings of Congress. Features include:

- A searchable database of the [art, artifacts, and documents](#) in the House Collection
- A searchable database of the nearly [11,000 individuals who have served](#) as representatives

- [A blog showcasing unique stories](#) in House history, research tips, and themes relevant to current events
- [Daily highlights from House history](#)
- [Educational resources](#) for educators and students
- [Research resources](#) to help answer questions about the House and historic legislation.

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress